

MILLIONS OF BUSINESS.

A Wilmington Concern That Has \$7,000,000 of Transactions in a Year—A Half Million Distributed in Our City—A Great Business Established by Two Wilmington Boys

Along the line of talking up one's city instead of listening to the lugubrious allegations of the pessimists, who are always with us, as discussed by live men at the meeting of the chamber of commerce last Thursday, The Messenger wants to endorse the proposition that such talking will benefit any city. This is especially so when we have something really worth talking about. We know of a certain enterprising and prosperous city that has won a great reputation and scored a big success because its citizens always talk it up. A Wilmington man, who had been greatly impressed by the talk about the city, but who had not heard much blowing about Wilmington, held up the aforementioned city as an example for Wilmington and said more business was done there than here. He was surprised when a Messenger representative smiled and wanted to guarantee him that two concerns in Wilmington did as much business in the course of a year's transactions as the whole of the business in the city we have in view. He said he had no idea of such a thing.

One of the concerns we mentioned in this connection was the cotton exporting firm of Messrs. Alexander Sprunt & Son, owners of the Champion Compress, which is absolutely by long odds, the finest and best equipped compress to be found in the south. Many of our readers, who know this firm does a tremendous business, will even be surprised to learn that the volume of their business aggregates \$7,000,000 in a year. Last season they bought, compressed and exported 200,000 bales of cotton, and this reminds us to state that they are the largest single cotton exporters in this country. They have 174 agents in North and South Carolina, over 100 agents in Europe, and besides a staff of 15 accountants in their Wilmington office, employ 450 laborers at the compress. They have two offices in Europe—one in Liverpool and one in Ghent. They distribute their large business throughout the whole world—from the Mediterranean sea to the gulf of Finland—and in many foreign lands they are known as well as they are at home. They charter their own steamers and bring them to this port and load from twenty to twenty-five large steamers a year, many of these vessels carrying away from 10,000 to 12,000 bales of cotton at a time. These steamers are all chartered for the firm's own business solely.

All the money made by this firm contributes to the prosperity of Wilmington. It is invested here only, and besides the investments of the firm we must take into account that they distribute \$400,000 in freights, handling, compressing, etc. It costs them to handle 200,000 bales of cotton the past season not less than an average of \$2 per bale. In the busy season they pay out per day in salaries and wages \$1,000 which adds to the circulation and has a perceptible influence in the business of Wilmington.

Talk about Wilmington's not being a good field for enterprise and endeavor! It must be remembered right here that the members of this firm are Wilmington boys, reared right in our midst. We may as well state also, by way of demonstrating what enterprise and pluck will do, that their immense business was built up since the war from nothing. The house was established in 1865 on a basis of six bales of cotton!

As we have said, Messrs. Alexander Sprunt & Son, in the Champion Compress, have the finest compress in the south. It is a handsome brick, fire proof building covering a whole square. Its front entrances are on Nutt street, and its rear opens on the harbor, with wharf, pier, dock, and water facilities hardly unequalled. The Atlantic Coast Line tracks run alongside of the compress on the north side of the building, and the tracks of the Wilmington, New Bern and Norfolk railway run along the front, affording connections and facilities for cars coming here on five railroads that connect Wilmington with all parts of the United States. Cotton is unloaded right from the cars into the jaws of the compress, and is trucked right from the compress into steamers loading for the greatest marts of the world. In addition to the splendid wharf facilities, they have had heretofore, Messrs. Sprunt & Son have just extended their piers 300 feet further out over the water and we venture the assertion that there are no finer wharves in America. The improvement on the water front has been such that five of the largest steamers, carrying 50,000 bales, can find easy berth and be loaded at the same time. In addition to extending the piers, the docks have been dredged and at medium tide there is a depth of twenty feet of water, with twenty-four feet or more at high tide.

The compress building and the machinery have also been greatly improved for the coming season. The two big compresses have been overhauled and refurnished with thirty-five tons of the most improved patterns of steel and iron parts. The wharf and outside of the building have been repainted, and all the compartments have been painted and kalsomined, giving the establishment an extremely neat appearance. Workmen are now engaged in rebuilding seventy-two feet of the wall at the northeast corner of the building where it was cracked on account of insecure foundation or by the earthquake of 1886. About thirty feet of

the Nutt street front wall will also be rebuilt, making the building perfect. The new wall being built at the northeast corner, is being put down to last forever. A secure foundation has been made with piling that will be covered with water, thus preserving them from rotting. In excavating for the wall and driving the piling, a bold spring of water was discovered and yesterday while the workmen were laying brick, the water was standing three or four feet deep at the foot of the wall, which is laid in cement. By the way, this spring is what the Wilmingtonians of half a century and beyond knew as Paradise spring, and with its limpid waters gushing out in a dell made lovely with graceful, low bending willows, stately junipers, and other foliage, it was the trysting place for the lovers of the years that have gone.

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A Run on the Ice Houses

There has been general complaint for a day or so that there was a scarcity of ice in Wilmington. Yesterday there was a general belief that an "ice famine" was impending, and it occasioned no little alarm. This was added to by a report that Messrs. W. E. Worth & Co.'s ice factory, the only one in the city, had a break-down.

It is a fact that ice became scarce and that many of our citizens could not get their orders filled. Many complained, on a rumor, that the scarcity was brought about by the shipping of large quantities of ice out of the city, and when the rumors became general the ice factory was overwhelmed with anxious people, all trying to get a supply of ice for Sunday.

A Messenger reporter called on Mr. Worth at the factory last night, and he stated that there was no ice famine, and had it not been for the alarming rumor that the factory had shut down there would have been no difficulty in supplying all demands. The rumor caused the people to rush in messages and messengers, doubling their orders for ice, and he found it impossible to promptly fill many orders. He stated, however, that the factory was kept up to its full capacity, and that by last night he was satisfying the demand.

He says he shipped no ice from the city, except to Wrightsville Beach and Carolina Beach, which he considers as a part of his city trade. He informs us that the increased consumption of ice during the hot weather, also tended to make it difficult to keep up with the orders, especially after he had "a run" on him. He says that June 19th his sales of ice were 31 tons; June 20th, 23 tons; June 21st, 10 tons; June 25th, 26 tons; from the 26th to 29th, 21 tons; For July 1st, 2nd and 3rd the sales were 34 to 36 tons per day. The capacity of the factory is 36 tons per day, and it will thus be seen that he is pushed up to the full notch.

We make no attack on or apology for Mr. Worth, but we give his statement in view of the complaints heard all over the city yesterday.

A New Counterfeit

Washington, July 3.—Chief Hazen, of the secret service has received from Chicago another counterfeit of the new issue of silver certificates. It is of the \$2 denomination with letter B. It is regarded as dangerous, being a photographic reproduction.

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Sudden Death

Chauncey Armstrong, a young colored man about 18 years old, who resides at Seventh and Bladen streets, took suddenly ill with cramp last night about 8 o'clock and died in half an hour.

Coroner Jacobs was notified, and upon investigation he decided that it was not necessary to hold an inquest. He ascertained that Armstrong, who was a man of previous good health, drank copiously of ice lemonade all day yesterday, and it is believed that, owing to the heated condition of his stomach, this caused his death.

The State Line Sunday School Chautauqua. (Correspondence of The Messenger.) Fair Bluff, N. C., July 3.

The State Line Sunday school Chautauqua, which meets at Fair Bluff, N. C., July 11th, and continues one week, promises to be one of the largest and most interesting meetings ever held in this section of the state. Several distinguished speakers from both states have promised to be present. The music will be under the direction of Professor J. H. Ruebush, of Dayton, Va., one of the most distinguished musicians of this country.

The Lumberton Orchestra, one of the best in the state, is also expected to be present. The well known firm of Ludden & Bates, through their enterprising agent, Rev. J. A. Smith, has kindly consented to furnish the Chautauqua one of their best Mathussek pianos. The opening sermon will be preached Sunday, the 11th inst., by Rev. John E. White, of Raleigh.

Tickets will be sold at reduced rates to persons wishing to attend the Chautauqua. N. D. J.

For the Katherine Kennedy Home

The Benevolent Society gratefully acknowledges having received contributions from the following friends during the past month: Two boxes of soap, from a popular druggist; a handsome parlor organ from Mrs. Humphrey; Mrs. R. R. Bridges, eight packages, through Mrs. Fannie Wilder; Mrs. R. J. Bunting, five packages; twenty-three packages from the Ladies' Aid Society, of St. Andrews' church; Mrs. Lizzie Muse, of Durham, money; Colonel John L. Cantwell, money; one load of wood from Mrs. James F. Post, Jr.; five packages through Mrs. Oscar Philpaw; beef weekly from Mr. John F. Garrett and Mr. Wm. Hays, Jr.; Colonel Roger Moore, vegetables weekly; contributions from Bishop A. W. Watson, Mrs. R. W. Hicks, Mrs. Lewis, Mrs. Dr. Carmichael, Mrs. Roger Moore, Mrs. Amy Harlowe, Mrs. Mary Mahn, Mrs. A. Lynch, Miss Maggie Hankins, Mrs. W. French, Mrs. George R. Bate, Mrs. Phil. Pearsall.

We are very grateful to every one who helps to support this institution. Visitors are welcome at all times, and information on all points is given cheerfully. We need ice tickets very much, and feel sure that the suggestion will meet with a ready response from those who know what is necessary, as well as luxury, ice is in this intensely hot weather.

THE SOCIETY.

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